EUROPEAN
URBAN
INITIATIVE

Capitalisation activity on policy recommendations and good practices for active mobility

Inception report

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1 INTRODUCTION

Active mobility, particularly when effectively integrated with other modes of transport, is increasingly recognised as a cornerstone of Europe's transition towards climate-neutral, resilient, and inclusive cities. Walking and cycling are not only low-carbon and low-cost, they also deliver tangible co-benefits for public health, social equity, traffic reduction and urban liveability. However, to unlock their full potential, active modes must be embedded within wider integrated mobility systems , seamlessly connected to public transport, supported by safe infrastructure in secure environments, and accessible to all groups of society.

EU Cohesion Policy has played a key role in catalysing this shift by supporting cities to experiment, test and adopt active mobility measures tailored to their local contexts. At different stages, Cohesion Policy has provided both the resources and the flexibility needed for urban authorities to innovate and take risks. In the current period (2021-2027), Cohesion Policy programmes channel substantial resources into the urban mobility transition, including an investment of 18 billion euros for sustainable urban mobility (light rail/metro/tram, walking and cycling infrastructure, multimodal hubs, zero-emission fleets, digital traffic management), delivered based on integrated urban mobility strategies (e.g. Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs))[1].Complementary intervention-level data on the cohesion data platform show additional urban mobility project funding through ERDF, CF, JTF and Interreg. During the previous programming period, the **Urban Innovative Actions** (UIA) initiative provided pioneering cities with the opportunity to pilot innovative solutions. Building on these experiences, the **European Urban Initiative** (EUI) now provides a more comprehensive framework for cities to scale up, transfer, and mainstream active and integrated mobility solutions across Europe. Together, these resources help cities move from pilots to city-scale deployment and replication of active mobility measures through an integrated process.

1.1 THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This inception report provides a focused roadmap for the European Urban Initiative's Policy Lab on Integrated and Active Urban Mobility. Its primary purpose is to frame the Lab's focus, clarify the problem context, outline the study lenses and detail the methodological path forward. In line with the EUI's mission of supporting sustainable urban development through innovation and knowledge sharing, the Policy Lab is positioned as a bridge between high-level EU policy frameworks and on-the-ground city action. The ultimate objective of this Policy Lab is to provide practical guidance and city-tested approaches for active mobility that measurably shift mode share and fit within integrated mobility systems. It will build on EUI's ethos of connecting cities, highlighting practical examples, and reflecting on how successful practices can be adapted and transferred across different urban contexts. Notably, the 2025 Annual Work Programme of EUI underlines mobility as a priority area, and this Lab is anchored in that strategic emphasis. By design, the Policy Lab will integrate insights from previous city initiatives (e.g., UIA, URBACT networks) and align them with broader EU urban mobility goals, ensuring that its work is both locally grounded and policy relevant.

The focus of this Policy Lab goes beyond promoting walking and cycling as active modes in isolation. It examines how active mobility can thrive in, and contribute to, a holistic urban

[1] **European Commission** (2023, April 28). Commission Staff working document: Cohesion 2021-2027: forging an ever stronger Union. Report on the outcome of the 2021-2027 cohesion policy programming. https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/reports/2021-2027-programming-outcome/report-outcome-2021-2027-cohesion-policy-programming-part1.pdf

mobility system. The study's scope explicitly includes intermodality within functional urban areas, urban-rural linkages, well-functioning and safe public transport with user-friendly services, transport poverty, and affordability/accessibility. Active mobility will be considered alongside public transport and other modes to form integrated, inclusive mobility systems that cater to the needs of all urban, peri-urban, and rural residents. Key questions driving the Lab will therefore address how to seamlessly connect walking and cycling with public transit (intermodal hubs, first/last-mile solutions), how to bridge mobility gaps between urban centres and their rural surroundings, and how to ensure "no one is left behind", tackling issues of transport poverty by making mobility options safe, inclusive (incl. gender-inclusive) accessible and affordable for everyone.

1.2 RELEVANCE AND TIMING

This Policy Lab arrives at a critical juncture for urban mobility in Europe, aligning with major EU policy priorities and pressing societal needs. This momentum is reflected in the recent EU-level commitments, such as the **European Green Deal**[2], the **Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy**[3], the **Urban Mobility Framework**[4] and **the European Declaration on Cycling**[5]. The current European Policy Landscape underlines that now is a critical window for scaling up active mobility across Europe. The Policy Lab is therefore timely: it provides a platform for cities to translate these high-level policy ambitions into actionable practices, test their transferability, and contribute to the EU's ambition of healthier, climate-neutral and more inclusive mobility systems.

In addition, there is fresh evidence of demand and momentum: the European Urban Initiative's own *Forward-Looking Survey* of urban stakeholders (2024) found that mobility is the top priority for sustainable urban development, selected as the number one theme by 30% of respondents (and among the top three priorities for 70% of them). Crucially, respondents emphasised active mobility, calling for more walking- and cycling-friendly cities and greener public transport alternatives. Mobility, especially active mobility, has thus emerged as a top-tier concern for cities and communities, recognised as key to achieving climate goals, liveable streets, and social inclusion. Against this backdrop, the timing of this Policy Lab is apt. It provides a platform to harness the current political will and public interest in active mobility, ensuring that emerging solutions are scaled up and accelerated across Europe's cities.

1.3 INTENDED AUDIENCE AND USE OF OUTPUTS

The outputs of this Policy Lab are designed to inform and inspire a broad audience of urban policymakers, practitioners, and those who support them. Urban authorities (city leaders, transport planners, mobility departments) stand to gain practical insights and tested approaches to integrate active mobility into their local plans. Managing authorities of EU funds at national and regional levels are another key audience; the Lab's findings can guide them in designing programs and investments that support active, intermodal mobility in

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[2] **European Commission.** (2019, December 11). *The European Green Deal.* https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

[3] **European Commission**. (2020). EUR-Lex - 52020DC0789 - EN - EUR-Lex Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy , putting European transport on track for the future https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0789

[4] **European Commission.** (2021, December 14). THE NEW EUROPEAN Urban Mobility Framework. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/fs_21_6781

[5] **European Commission.** (2024, April 3). *European Declaration on Cycling - EUR-Lex - 32024C02377 - EN - EUR-Lex*. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/2377/oj/eng

functional urban areas. The wider community of urban networks and initiatives, such as EUI, URBACT, Urban Agenda for the EU (UAEU) Partnership on Urban Mobility, and CIVITAS, is also targeted so that they can disseminate lessons learned and best practices among cities committed to sustainable mobility. Finally, European Commission services (notably DG REGIO, DG MOVE, and related bodies) will be able to use the Lab's results to refine policy frameworks and future funding calls, ensuring that on-the-ground realities and innovations are reflected in EU urban mobility policy.

Readers of this inception report and subsequent outputs can expect to find actionable knowledge: a clear set of focus areas, case studies, and policy recommendations that can be used to advance accessible and inclusive active mobility within integrated transport systems. Ultimately, the aim is that these outputs help city practitioners "be more efficient and do better", whether it's piloting new solutions, shaping integrated mobility strategies, or addressing challenges like safety and affordability, and thereby turn Europe's active mobility ambitions into a tangible, everyday reality.

2 ACTIVE & INTEGRATED MOBILITY IN EUROPEAN CITIES

2.1 DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE

For clarity and consistency in this study, active mobility denotes human-powered travel, principally **walking**, **cycling and wheelchair use**, considered both as standalone trips and as the universal "access legs" that connect people to the wider system. Where appropriate, we also refer to soft mobility to capture electrically assisted cycles that support low-impact travel choices (e.g., e-bikes), recognising their complementary role within an inclusive offer.

We define an **integrated mobility system** as the coherent, intermodal arrangement of services, infrastructure, data and rules that enables seamless door-to-door journeys for diverse users across spatial scales, explicitly including urban,rural linkages and at the Functional Urban Area (FUA) level. In practical terms, this means designing for transfers, coordinating operations and fares, and managing space and demand so that sustainable modes reinforce each other rather than compete. Within that system, public transport functions as the backbone, a high-capacity, spatially efficient layer around which streets and services are organised, while walking (and, where relevant, cycling) is treated as the default first- and last-mile connectors that make the backbone usable for all.

Our use of **accessibility** follows the "access over mobility" perspective: accessibility is the ability to reach everyday opportunities within a reasonable time, cost and effort, varying by person, time of day and context, rather than simply the speed or distance one can travel. This aligns with the "15-minute city" emphasis on proximity, diversity, density and ubiquity.

Inclusion refers to the design and governance of mobility so that people of different ages, genders and abilities, including those with reduced mobility, can safely and comfortably use the network, with due attention to when non-pedalled soft mobility may be a better fit for specific needs or terrains.

Behaviour change is used in its staged sense, transitioning individuals and groups from pre-motivation to motivation and volition through targeted combinations of infrastructure, incentives, information and participation, so that new, sustainable travel habits are formed and maintained.

Finally, **data and technology** cover the tools and workflows (sensors, tracking systems, smart services, apps and urban-mobility management platforms) that generate evidence, integrate services and inform decisions. These are to be embedded in planning through Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs), the EU's reference framework for making walking and cycling central to city transport strategies[6].

Based on the projects which will be reviewed under this Policy Lab, information from a thematic overview provided by the work and outputs of other relevant actors and previous knowledge developed by EUI, UIA and URBACT, the Policy Lab will focus on four key themes:

- Accessibility and inclusion within integrated mobility systems
- Data and technology
- Behaviour change
- Key challenges to increasing the modal share of active mobility in cities

2.2 EUROPEAN POLICY AND CONTEXT

The evolving policy landscape for urban mobility in Europe has undergone significant transformation over the past five years, driven by the European Green Deal and subsequent waves of regulatory, strategic, and financial initiatives. The policy environment continues to shift rapidly, placing increasing demands on national, regional and local authorities to adapt and deliver.

The policy landscape for urban mobility in Europe has undergone a significant transformation over the past five years. Since the launch of the **European Green Deal[7].** It is a response to climate and environmental-related challenges, aiming to transform the EU into a prosperous society with a resource-efficient economy, where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050. To get there, the European Commission adopted a package of proposals to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels, which has been recently updated setting a 2040 EU climate target of 90% reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990 levels, as requested by the **Commission's Political Guidelines for 2024-2029**[8]. These initiatives impact the transport sector, set new sustainability goals and implement tools for national, regional, and local authorities. It has placed sustainable, integrated mobility, with walking and cycling at its core, firmly on the agenda of national, regional and local authorities.

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[6] **European Commission. (n.d.).** Sustainable urban mobility planning and monitoring - European Commission. Retrieved August 22, 2025, from https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/urban-transport/sustainable-urban-mobility-planning-and-monitoring_en

[7] **European Commission.** (2019, December 11). *The European Green Deal.* https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

[8] **European Commission.** (2025, July). *EU proposes 90 % net-emission-reduction target for 2040* (Press release IP/25/1687). https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_1687

The 2021 **Urban Mobility Framework**[9] aims, amongst its other objectives, to enhance the quality of life in urban areas, delivering the **Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy**[10]**,** by addressing challenges like air pollution, congestion, safety, accessibility, and e-commerce growth. It elevates active mobility and public transport as the backbone of city travel, emphasises first/last-mile integration and multimodal hubs, and calls for integrated planning and targeted funding to tackle air pollution, congestion and safety while improving accessibility. In doing so, it sets the tone for walking and cycling to become default choices where conditions allow, and positions city authorities as the primary delivery agents of this shift. Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic to support climate-neutral, emission-free urban transport are also an important component of the Urban Mobility Framework. Complementing these efforts, the '**Fit for 55' package**[11], including 13 legislative proposals, was introduced with the overarching goal of reducing EU greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. To help bring the **EU Green Deal**[12] objectives to reality, this package focuses on key reductions in carbon emissions, infrastructure for electric vehicles, housing, and also highlights the role of national and local authorities, as well as the financial support needed for a successful transition.

The 2023 revision of the **TEN-T Regulation** [13] represents a significant step forward, as it establishes a binding role for integrated urban mobility planning within Europe's transport systems. It defines **431 urban nodes** and mandates closer cooperation with local authorities. Key obligations for urban nodes include the adoption and monitoring of **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs)** by 2027, data collection and reporting on sustainability, safety, and accessibility by 2027, but also the development of multimodal passenger hubs, ensuring access to active[14] and public transport by 2030, with at least one recharging station and the establishment of at least one multimodal freight terminal, where needed, by 2040. SUMPs have been first developed as part of the 2013 Urban Mobility Package, catalysing the preparation and update of hundreds of urban mobility plans.

Cohesion Policy is the EU's primary investment policy for cities and a key lever for the urban transition. Setting 18 billion euros for sustainable urban mobility infrastructure developed in through an SUMP. This sits alongside additional transport investments under "A more connected Europe" that reinforce low-carbon mobility and safety, with a dedicated funding of 40 billion Euros and 92% of this funding supports cohesion countries.[15] At the intervention level, the Commission's Cohesion Open Data indicates that around 3.4 billion euros were allocated for cycling infrastructure, with national co-financing taking cycling investments higher, around 4.7 billion euros in total, which has more than quadruple since the 2007-2013

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[9] **European Commission.** (2021, December 14). THE NEW EUROPEAN Urban Mobility Framework. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/fs_21_6781

[10] **European Commission.** (2020). *EUR-Lex - 52020DC0789 - EN - EUR-Lex Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy , putting European transport on track for the future* https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0789

[11] **Council of the European Union.** (n.d.). *Fit for 55: Delivering the European Green Deal.* https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/fit-for-55/

[12] **European Commission.** (2019, December 11). *The European Green Deal.* https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

[13] **European Commission.** (2024). *European Parliament legislative resolution PE-56-2024.* https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/PE-56-2024-INIT/en/pdf

[14] https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/urban-transport/active-mobility-walking-and-cycling_en

[15] **European Commission** (2023, April 28). Commission Staff working document: Cohesion 2021-2027: forging an ever stronger Union. Report on the outcome of the 2021-2027 cohesion policy programming. https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/reports/2021-2027-programming-outcome/report-outcome-2021-2027-cohesion-policy-programming-part1.pdf

programme.[16][17] One of the Cohesion policy priorities around sustainable transport contributes to enhancing regional mobility by connecting secondary and tertiary nodes to TEN-T, ensuring a larger integration of smaller cities to the wide network.

Several complementary EU initiatives reinforce the urban mobility agenda. Supporting policy and regulatory initiatives include the **EU Declaration on Cycling,** which sets out 8 principles and 36 commitments to promote cycling across Europe. The implementation of this strategy's elements is of urban and regional relevance, facilitated through coordination with the national cycling declaration contact points process. The Declaration commits Member States and cities to expanding safe cycling infrastructure, improving multimodality, and addressing inclusivity and accessibility barriers. Its adoption provides a strong political mandate for cities to accelerate investment and policy reforms in cycling.

More recently, the **Social Climate Fund[18] was introduced as** a key tool, which aims to fight transport poverty by ensuring affordable access to green mobility for vulnerable groups through the involvement of local and regional authorities in the development of efficient and effective measures. The **EU Mission "100 Climate Neutral & Smart Cities by 2030"** is another flagship initiative under Horizon Europe aimed at transforming urban areas into living labs for climate action. The Mission's goal is to develop **100 climate-neutral and smart cities** by 2030, which will pioneer clean energy, sustainable mobility, green infrastructure, and citizen engagement. These cities then serve as **innovation hubs** to inspire all European cities to achieve full climate neutrality by 2050

The **New Commission Political Guidelines[19]** and the **EU Agenda for Cities[20]** they are also key to EU support for cities, ensuring that urban mobility is well-integrated into future policy implementation. Focus has also been given to promote a resilient and competitive **tourism** sector, in line with the **EU Agenda for Tourism 2030**. The European Commission have been committed to a transition pathway towards a **green and digital tourism[21].**

Similarly, the EUI and the Urban Agenda for the EU are both key components of the EU's approach to urban development, working within the framework of Cohesion Policy. The EUI supports cities in developing innovative and transferable solutions to urban challenges, while the Urban Agenda for the EU focuses on improving the effectiveness of EU and national policies related to urban areas. This process is supported by its own information service and engagement portal (PORTICO).

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16 **European Commission.** (2025). *2021-2027 - EU allocation to urban mobility by intervention | Cohesion Open Data*. https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/2021-2027-Categorisation/2021-2027-EU-allocation-to-urban-mobility-by-inter/3ejj-p5fj?utm

17 **Leiner, V.** (n.d.). Cohesion policy support for sustainable urban mobility sustainable urban mobility. https://civitas.eu/sites/default/files/cohesion_policy_support_for_sustainable_urban.pdf

18 **European Parliament & Council of the European Union.** (2023, May 10). *Regulation (EU) 2023/955 establishing a Social Climate Fund and amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1060*. Official Journal of the European Union, L 130, 1,51. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX%3A32023R0955

19 **European Commission.** (2024, July 18). *Political guidelines 2024-2029* [PDF]. https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/e6cd4328-673c-4e7a-8683-f63ffb2cf648_en?filename=Political%20Guidelines%202024-2029_EN.pdf

20 **European Commission.** (n.d.). *Urban Agenda for the EU*. https://commission.europa.eu/eu-regional-and-urban-development/topics/cities-and-urban-development/urban-agenda-eu_en

21 **European Commission.** (2025, June 12). *European Commission publishes stocktaking report on green and digital transition in tourism.* EU Urban Mobility Observatory. https://urban-mobility-observatory.transport.ec.europa.eu/news-events/news/european-commission-publishes-stocktaking-report-green-and-digital-transition-tourism-2025-06-12_en

In their recent speech to the European Parliament Plenary, the **Transport and Tourism Commissioner** highlighted the importance of a comprehensive, high-quality, affordable and accessible public transport system as the backbone of sustainable urban mobility[22]. Strong and close cooperation between regional, local and national governments is key to unlocking funding mechanisms to deliver a well-balanced mix of transport modes.

The EU urban mobility policy landscape is set to evolve in the coming years through several key initiatives that align with both the EU's **policy agenda for cities** and broader transport priorities. At the urban level, **PORTICO** and DG REGIO's evolving **EU Agenda for Cities** will play a central role in supporting cities with data, policy intelligence, and peer learning aligned with the Urban Agenda's pillars of better regulation, funding, and knowledge. From a transport policy perspective, the **Transport Commissioner's Mission Letter[23]** outlines ambitious goals with direct urban implications, including the development of a **single market for transport services** and a **single EU-wide booking and ticketing regulation**, which will benefit multimodal integration and digitalisation in urban travel. The push for **high-speed rail connections between EU capitals** also holds transformative potential for regional and peri-urban nodes. Furthermore, urban areas are expected to benefit from a proposed Sustainable Transport Investment Plan, particularly when it supports clean public transportation, smart mobility infrastructure, and zero-emission logistics. The **EU Industrial Plan for the Automotive Sector**, while focused on competitiveness and decarbonisation, may influence urban mobility transitions through support for e-mobility ecosystems and local manufacturing. Lastly, the growing emphasis on the **social dimension of transport**, including equitable access, job quality, and tackling transport poverty, highlights the EU's intent to ensure that urban and rural mobility systems are inclusive, resilient, and fair to all.

2.3 EXISTING KNOWLEDGE AND GAPS

Across EU initiatives and city networks, several themes are now well established in relation to active mobility and integrated mobility. First, **safe, continuous walking and cycling networks**, especially in the catchment areas of stations and interchanges, are considered preconditions for the uptake of active modes. Second, **restricting car dominance and reallocating street space** are seen to unlock room for people-centred uses and safer conditions for vulnerable users. Third, **behavioural measures**, ranging from incentives to participatory design, enhance acceptance and facilitate a durable modal shift, but can only be successful in combination with other measures. Fourth, **data and digital tools** can increasingly support planning, operations and user information. Fifth, **inclusion must be engineered into design and service delivery**, not addressed after the fact, to ensure that the measures accurately respond to the needs of the target groups. These themes recur across EU knowledge streams and are reflected in EUI's initial scoping of the Lab.

URBACT's *Walk'n'Roll Cities* capitalisation reinforces the same message from the vantage point of public space by highlighting that reclaiming streets from car dominance, piloting pedestrian and cycling interventions, and coupling them with transparent engagement can

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22 **European Commission.** (2025, June 18). *Statement on competitive, efficient and sustainable public transport.* https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech_25_1554

23 **European Commission.** (2024, September 17). *Mission letter to Apostolos Tzitzikostas, Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism.* https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/de676935-f28c-41c1-bbd2-e54646c82941_en?filename=Mission%20letter%20-%20TZITZIKOSTAS.pdf

shift both space and sentiment, though results remain sensitive to process design and local trade-offs. The initiative also surfaces practical cautions and highlights the need for multi-level coordination on metropolitan corridors, the limits of temporary measures if poorly prepared, and the fiscal pressures that can undermine service quality and stall reform.

UIA's knowledge work on "Innovation in Urban Mobility in the 2020s" reinforces and nuances these findings by structuring lessons around three cross-cutting questions, how can cities exploit data to transform urban mobility, how they organise collaboration with stakeholders and who are those stakeholders, and how they shift travellers away from private cars to collective transport and soft mobility options, and by analysing evidence from five cities (Albertslund, Lahti, Ghent, Toulouse Métropole, Szeged). It shows that durable shifts to walking and cycling happen when safe infrastructure is coupled with enabling regulation, intermodal connections, and timely user information (e.g. through MaaS). It illustrated Ghent's TMaaS alerts that prompt cycling in good weather or direct drivers to Park & Ride. Behaviour change is treated as the downstream result of combined measures rather than stand-alone campaigns. UIA frames this through the avoid, shift, improve lens and shows that co-creation, positive user experience, and timely information, layered onto safe infrastructure and enabling regulations, are what make shifts stick. Overall, the UIA synthesis aligns with this Policy Lab's approach, illustrating that technology is a means, not an end. Durable change emerges when data, governance, intermodality, and inclusive design are orchestrated into integrated, coherent, evidence-led packages.

Notwithstanding this maturing conceptual consensus, gaps persist in the operational "how-to," especially around (i) the relative effectiveness of different behaviour-change levers; (ii) intermodality at FUA scale, including first/last-mile design for longer or multi-segment trips; (iii) governance capacity and sequencing, how cities align politics, budgets and delivery partners to outlast electoral cycles; and (iv) transferability conditions, what must be adapted for smaller or less resourced cities, and how inclusion and affordability are protected as systems scale. These are the knowledge gaps this Lab is designed to close.

Methodologically, the Lab's comparative nature, through questionnaires, hearings, and focus groups, is designed to move the field from general principles to evidence-based implementation pathways, with traceable links from case material to practice-ready recommendations. This emphasis is also reflected in the study's methodological note and work plan.

2.4 PROBLEM FRAMING

Despite progress, uptake of active modes remains low and uneven across Europe. Legacies of car-centric planning continue to shape street hierarchies, junction design and parking policy; network discontinuities and unsafe crossings deter walking and cycling where the latent demand is high; and intermodal friction at stations undermines first- and last-mile connectivity. With the increased pressure from climate goals, congestion and public-health concerns, more attention to the integration of walking, cycling and public transport is needed to enhance both active travel and public transport and reduce the use of private cars. At the metropolitan scale, travel distances and functional specialisation amplify these barriers, while social and spatial inequities compound them for groups facing affordability constraints or reduced mobility. The result is a persistent implementation gap between policy aspirations and everyday experience.

Framed within this EUI Policy Lab, the central challenge is therefore to embed walking and cycling within integrated systems, treating them as routine links in a chain that also includes reliable, affordable, and accessible public transport, and to make the links between urban, peri-urban, and rural spaces to a large extent. That implies reallocating and redesigning street space for safety and legibility; engineering seamless interchanges and universal access; deploying data and service design to reduce user effort; including diverse target groups in measure planning and organising governance and finance, so that quick wins can lead to durable change. This study's focus on behaviour change, data and technology, accessibility and inclusion, and the barriers that slow modal shift, directly reflects an integrated problem definition and a balanced approach.

3 KEY CHALLENGES, BARRIERS AND ENABLERS

Despite clear evidence that active mobility lowers greenhouse gas emissions and helps prevent non-communicable diseases (NCDs) (Patel et al., 2019; Campbell et al., 2019), walking and cycling remain underused in most European cities (WHO and UNECE, 2022). This gap reflects a web of interlinked challenges documented in recent literature (WHO 2025; ECF 2023; UNECE 2021).

Decades of car-centric planning have shaped norms, habits, and urban form, contributing to cultural and behavioural inertia. Walking and cycling are often perceived as secondary, inconvenient, or unsafe, even for short trips, particularly in suburban and peri-urban areas. These convictions strongly influence daily habits, particularly during home-to-work and home-to-school commutes. Second, mobility research often focuses on commuting, but non-commute trips (such as shopping, errands, and leisure) account for 50,60% of the distance travelled. These trips offer more flexibility but remain predominantly motorised. When these trips are done by walking or cycling, inhabitants may struggle with inadequate and disjointed infrastructures. Cities often lack safe, continuous and accessible walking/cycling networks. For example, disconnected, substandard or poorly maintained lanes erode visibility, usability and ultimately trust. This also contributes to safety concerns, impacting both perceived and actual safety risks, especially from motorised traffic, which may deter cycling uptake, particularly among vulnerable users, including children, older adults, and women.

When these infrastructures exist, access to safe and attractive infrastructure may be uneven. Lower-income, younger, and female groups face worse conditions, limited connectivity, and less supportive infrastructure. They also may be less integrated digitally in transport tools, as walking and, to a lesser extent, cycling are often missing from smart city platforms and MaaS tools, limiting their visibility and usability. This may be due to a lack of prioritisation of active modes, but also to the potential lack of data on walking and cycling patterns being sparse, which hinders planning, impact assessment, and justification for investments and scaling. Overall, despite its high cost-effectiveness, economic, social, and health value, active mobility receives low public funding, further contributing to the struggle in its uptake.

Modern urban lifestyles exacerbate these barriers. The pace of life, the need for efficiency, and the prioritisation of convenience drive people toward motorised transport, even when they are aware of the health/environmental costs. Multi-stop daily routines involving school, work, errands, and caregiving make active travel less feasible, especially in the perception of working-age adults. It is therefore essential to address active mobility through a life-course perspective, understanding that the foundations of sustainable mobility habits are built early

and must be nurtured throughout life. From safe, cyclable, and walkable streets for children to active commuting for working-age adults, to mobility-enhancing settings for older citizens, and finally to active lifestyles for all, the project inspires and supports the creation of urban ecosystems where every age group can thrive through active mobility.

Some of the challenges observed in the literature and studies include:

- **Urban and mobility planning**: active mobility interventions in European cities are frequently centred on infrastructure delivery (e.g., bike lanes, pedestrian zones) without explicit integration of health objectives, and responsibilities are often split across departments (Racioppi F. et al, 2021; WHO/UNECE 2022; EU Declaration on Cycling 2024).
- **Urban interventions**: many cities test innovative but isolated solutions (e.g. superblocks, nudging pilots, smart crossings, tactical urbanism) without systemic replication and integration with other modes.
- **Digital integration**: walking and cycling remain under-integrated into European MaaS platforms and smart city data systems, and such data are seldom used for health impact monitoring (Pangbourne, K. et al. 2020; EU Revised ITS Directive 2023).
- **Infrastructure design**: quality and continuity of cycling and walking infrastructure vary considerably between and within European cities, with notable gaps in safety, accessibility, and attractiveness, particularly for vulnerable groups (WHO 2022; EU Urban Mobility Framework 2021).
- **Governance and partnerships**: sustained, formal collaboration between different departments (health, environment and transport) is uncommon; cooperation often occurs on a temporary, project-based basis (EU Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy 2020).
- **Community engagement**: public engagement in active mobility planning is often limited to statutory consultations, with few examples of continuous or multi-city learning frameworks (Steenberghen, T. et al. 2017; Rupprecht Consult 2019)
- **Behavioural change**: behaviour change campaigns for active mobility are frequently generic and rarely tailored to specific life stages or local barriers (WHO 2020)
- **Monitoring and evaluation**: health impacts of active mobility policies/interventions are seldom quantified, and common indicators or long-term datasets are lacking in the EU (WHO & UNECE 2021)

Based on these challenges and the scope of the policy Lab, the following sections delve deeper into some of the challenges and barriers to integrating active mobility with other modes.

3.1 ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

A city that appears "accessible" under static, citywide averages can be meaningfully inaccessible for many residents once individual characteristics and time-dependence are considered. Walking and cycling access varies with age, gender, ability, daylight and opening hours, and these variations directly determine whether public transport is a viable backbone for everyday trips (Willberg et al., 2023; Walk21, 2024). Without an explicit focus on these differences, investments risk widening rather than narrowing gaps in opportunity.

On the ground, inclusion falters where pedestrian networks are discontinuous or indirect, crossings are unsafe or onerous, footways are uneven or poorly lit, and wayfinding is unclear. Such conditions disproportionately deter women, older adults, children and persons with reduced mobility (Willberg et al., 2023). Institutional fragmentation compounds these issues: responsibility for pedestrian infrastructure, public transport operations, and access regulation often sits with different departments, leading to disjointed priorities and intermittent maintenance. Where access regulations are not standardised or transparently communicated, small businesses and cross-border users face compliance costs that can undermine support for health- and climate-driven measures.

The most effective inclusion strategies are integrative. Cities should treat high-quality public transport as the inclusive backbone and walking as the universal connector, then measure and improve the quality of walkable catchments in terms of continuity, safety, lighting, weather protection, seating, and maintenance. Dynamic accessibility dashboard, disaggregated by time of day and user segment, enable targeted, defensible prioritisation. Harmonised indicators and machine-readable access rules improve transparency and reduce unintended exclusion, while externality-based appraisal helps channel investment to neighbourhoods where benefits for health, equity and commercial vitality are largest (Pisoni et al., 2022). Embedding these practices in SUMPs and performance frameworks makes progress visible and fundable (URBAN AGENDA FOR THE EU, 2019; URBAN AGENDA FOR THE EU, Reinforcing SUMP uptake, 2019).

3.2 DATA & TECHNOLOGY

Urban mobility decisions are still too often taken on the basis of incomplete or static evidence. Pandemic-era volatility has complicated forecasting, as teleworking, online retail and altered risk perceptions changed how, when and why people travel (Christidis et al., 2021). At the same time, many accessibility indicators remain "average-case": they assume uniform walking speeds and constant service availability, thereby under-representing the experience of older people, women, children and persons with disabilities, and overlooking time-of-day and seasonal effects (Willberg et al., 2023). This combination makes it difficult to prioritise investments that genuinely increase active mobility within an integrated system.

Three practical obstacles have been observed as recur in city practice. First, data collection is fragmented across agencies and modes: walking is often measured separately from public transport, and door-to-door experience is incompletely captured. Second, local capacity to specify, procure and govern interoperable data systems is uneven, which can lead to dependence on proprietary tools that are ill-suited to dynamic accessibility analysis. Third, the absence of harmonised datasets and shared indicators (e.g., for UVARs or first/last-mile access) limits comparability across jurisdictions and reduces the policy value of monitoring.

The literature points to a coherent data stack that cities can assemble within their SUMPs or equivalent sustainable mobility plans to better integrate active mobility with other modes. At the strategic level, scenario-based modelling should be used to test sensitivities around demand recovery and car rebound. At the operational level, passively collected traces (apps, sensors, counters) can be paired with survey instruments to monitor actual walking and cycling, while dynamic, equity-aware accessibility measures expose temporal and distributional gaps in first/last-mile access to public transport. Appraisal should be anchored in externality accounting (health, air quality, safety, climate) to express the societal value of

mode shift in budget terms (Pisoni et al., 2022). In parallel, European policy tools continue to normalise comparable data. The Urban Agenda for the EU's work on Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) promotes indicator frameworks that explicitly include walking access to public transport, while repositories such as the Urban Access Regulations portal consolidate Urban Vehicle Access Regulation (UVAR) rules, increasing transparency and supporting interoperable enforcement and user information (URBAN AGENDA FOR THE EU, 2019; Urban Access Regulations portal, 2019).

3.3 BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

Infrastructure improvement is necessary but sometimes insufficient to create a paradigm shift in modal share. Durable shifts depend on how people form incentives, build habits and experience their journeys. Individuals move from pre-motivation to motivation and then to volition, and their responsiveness to interventions shifts accordingly. Because many programmes concentrate on access alone, measures that cultivate ability and ambition, through wayfinding, social incentives, feedback and co-design, are often the missing multipliers (Millonig, 2021). COVID-19 illustrated the fragility of habits where walking and cycling rose during restrictions, public transport use fell, and, once constraints were lifted, car use rebounded in many places (Anke et al., 2021; Echaniz et al., 2021). Sustaining a durable modal shift therefore requires interventions that both create new habits and prevent relapse, across diverse user segments.

Two limitations are commonly observed. First, infrastructure-only strategies and broad, undifferentiated campaigns tend to produce modest average effects because they do not address the specific drivers of behaviour at each stage (e.g., perceived norms, self-efficacy or immediate convenience). Second, many programmes lack objective outcome measures (counts, app-based traces) and rely instead on self-report alone, making it difficult to assess real changes in use and to refine measures iteratively (Wallén Warner et al., 2021).

The strongest effects are reported when "hard" measures (safe, continuous, direct walking and cycling networks with lower traffic speeds) are combined with "soft" measures that are deliberately matched to behavioural stages. Effective examples include self-monitoring and feedback tools, small convenience "objects" that remove friction (secure bike parking, bike-share, cargo-bike trials), targeted incentives, and social-norm messaging that makes sustainable choices visible and aspirational (Doğru et al., 2021). Integrating walking with public transport, through safe crossings, legible networks and high-quality public-realm design around stops and stations, simultaneously lowers the perceived cost of two sustainable behaviours and raises the overall attractiveness of the system (Walk21, 2024). Programmes should be instrumented from the outset with before/after measurement and, where feasible, comparison corridors to enable credible evaluation (Zukowska et al., 2022; Wallén Warner et al., 2021).

3.4 KEY CHALLENGES TO INCREASING THE MODAL SHARE OF ACTIVE MOBILITY IN CITIES

Structural lock-ins from decades of car-centred planning, together with the imperative to meet cumulative carbon budgets, mean that technology substitution alone will not suffice. Evidence shows that electrification must be complemented by substantial reductions in car use and by sustained growth in active and public-transport modes (Winkler et al., 2023). Delivering this shift at scale is politically contested as reallocating street space, revising

parking norms and implementing access regulations can provoke resistance if benefits are not clearly communicated and rapidly experienced.

Implementation is often constrained by three interlinked factors. First, public-transport finances have been strained by unstable post-pandemic demand, limiting the headroom for service improvements even as expectations remain high. Second, fragmented delivery (short-lived pilots, isolated projects, changing political mandates) prevents networks from achieving the continuity and quality thresholds that change behaviour. Third, regulatory patchworks, especially for access restrictions, create confusion for users and operators, depressing compliance and blunting system benefits (Anke et al., 2021; Echaniz et al., 2021; Doğru et al., 2021; Wallén Warner et al., 2021).

The literature consistently supports combined policy packages. The most reliable path to higher active-mode share couples quality improvements that make walking-plus-public transport the convenient default (safer, denser catchments; reliable and frequent services; legible interchanges) with demand-side policies that reduce low-value car trips and free up urban space (parking reform, UVARs, pricing where appropriate). Externality-based valuations demonstrate that even modest percentage-point shifts to active modes generate large societal returns, strengthening the fiscal case for sustained, multi-year investment. Sequencing matters: early, visible public-realm improvements and service enhancements should coincide with clear communications and fair, predictable access rules, so that residents and businesses experience benefits quickly and understand the rationale for change. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks, codified in SUMPs, provide the feedback loops needed to maintain momentum and adjust course (Walk21, 2024; URBAN AGENDA FOR THE EU, 2019).

4 STUDY FOCUS

The reviewed literature confirms a wide array of integrated active-mobility solutions now in use across Europe, ranging from protected walking and cycling networks and first/last-mile improvements around public-transport hubs to behaviour-change programmes, Urban Vehicle Access Regulations, data-driven management tools and governance innovations. These solutions differ markedly in nature, maturity and scale. Some are city-wide frameworks embedded in SUMPs and metropolitan strategies, while others are site-specific interventions in school streets or peri-urban connectors. Although active and integrated mobility have generated a substantial evidence base over the past decade, the material is unevenly structured from the perspective of EU cities seeking practice-ready, transferable packages. Much of the accessible guidance remains anchored in large national or regional schemes and in flagship, capital-intensive programmes that do not always reflect the organisational capacity, budget envelope or street typologies of small and medium-sized cities. As a result, sorting through resources and distilling what truly works at city scale, and under what conditions, remains challenging for practitioners.

This Policy Lab is designed to bridge that gap. It will assemble practical, city-tested examples that place walking and cycling inside integrated mobility systems with public transport as the backbone; document the contexts in which measures have been most effective (e.g., school mobility, interchange areas, suburban and urban,rural links, neighbourhood safety); and extract the enabling conditions, sequencing and governance arrangements that turn pilots into durable networks. The Lab will also examine the trade-offs that cities face, space

reallocation, parking reform, UVAR design, and how these can be balanced with early, visible public-realm benefits and fair, predictable rules to sustain public support. In parallel, it will codify practices, enabling cities to plan, prioritise, and justify investments with confidence, and managing authorities to align funding with demonstrable outcomes.

In doing so, this Policy Lab adopts a clear working definition of integrated active mobility anchored in EU practice. Walking and cycling are seen as universal access modes that need to be linked seamlessly to reliable, affordable, safe public transport, inclusion engineered by design for different ages, genders and abilities, and continuous feedback through monitoring and citizen engagement. The literature also cautions against one-size-fits-all prescriptions: while there are common principles, networks must be safe and continuous, behaviour measures must be adapted to diverse potential users, rules and data must be interoperable and the local context shapes the feasible path.

As this inception report sets out, using the reviewed literature, there is a good existing level of understanding of the relevance (the "why") of active mobility for modern cities. Previous works, initiatives and academic researchers have further defined and detailed the areas of focus (the "what") required for delivering active mobility measures within integrated mobility systems.

The aim of this Policy Lab is therefore to translate a well-understood "why" and "what" and further develop the practical "how" cities can create a paradigm shift in the modal share of active mobility inside an integrated mobility system. It aims at identifying what better design, implementation and mainstreaming of sustainable urban development policies and strategies contribute to the success of active mobility measures and uptake by citizens.

We began the Policy Lab with two overarching questions:

How can cities promote active mobility in practice?

How can cities integrate active mobility effectively into an integrated mobility system that meets the needs of different users at different spatial levels (including taking account of urban-rural linkages and Functional Urban Areas)

From these two questions, four original key research questions (OKRQ) were identified by EUI to guide the Policy Lab research:

1. How have cities successfully implemented integrated and active mobility solutions? (OKRQ 1)
2. What are the key barriers and challenges to ensuring integrated mobility and increasing the share of active mobility? (OKRQ 2)
3. How have cities addressed infrastructure, behaviour change, and inclusivity? (OKRQ 3)
4. What lessons can be drawn from existing urban mobility projects to help other cities replicate or scale up successful practices? (OKRQ 4)

Based on an initial mapping of projects and an informed thematic overview, EUI identified these key research questions along four thematic lens:

- **Behaviour change**

    - How can cities effectively drive a shift in public behaviour towards active mobility?
- **Data and technology**: In what ways can cities leverage modern data and technology to promote active mobility within an integrated mobility system?
- **Accessibility and inclusion within an integrated mobility system**:
    - How can cities ensure that active mobility solutions are accessible and inclusive for all users?
    - How can active mobility be supported within an appropriate intermodal system (including different modes of sustainable urban transport) to meet diverse needs, including in Functional Urban Areas and promoting urban-rural linkages?
    - What are the potential limits of active mobility within the overall modal mix of a city, taking into account the needs of different groups such as those with reduced mobility, as well as different spatial dimensions?
    - In what circumstances is it more appropriate to promote soft mobility (including electric bikes and other vehicles) rather than specifically active modes as part of an overall accessible and sustainable system?
- **Key challenges to increasing the modal share of active mobility in cities**:
    - What does success look like in terms of a paradigm shift in active mobility and what are the key success factors for achieving this change?
    - What is stopping good practice examples from spreading across all cities in Europe?
    - How can cities fund the investments needed to overcome these challenges and how can they identify and address those groups whose behaviours most stubbornly resist change to more active forms of mobility?

Based on these initial framing questions set by EUI and our analysis of the context and problem framing, we have distilled four working observations from EU practice and context which further shapes our research. These observations are as follows:

- **Integrated packages deliver durable change.** The most significant and lasting impacts arise when protected networks and safe crossings are delivered together with first/last-mile design at hubs, demand-management measures, and user-specific behaviour-change actions.
- **Inclusion by design is decisive**. Dynamic accessibility (by time of day and user group), universal design around interchanges, and targeted safety improvements unlock latent demand and are critical to achieving an equitable mode shift.
- **Data and technology can make the difference**. Cities that instrument technologies and programmes with objective use data, equity-aware accessibility metrics and externality valuations make better choices and adjust course faster.
- **Governance and sequencing matter**. Stable, multi-year delivery coalitions, early visible wins, clear communication, and interoperable rules (e.g., machine-readable UVARs) reduce friction and help reforms outlast electoral cycles.

Taken together, the two overarching questions, the four original KRQs, the four thematic lenses identified by EUI, and these four working observations have been combined into a set of seventeen refined research questions (Table 1). These refined questions provide the operational backbone for the Policy Lab, ensuring that each thematic lens, behaviour change,

data and technology, accessibility and inclusion, and key challenges, is systematically addressed in relation to the original KRQs.

Table 1. Key research questions

Topics	Refined research questions	Reference to original KRQs
Accessibility and inclusion	1. Which groups and which needs require to be addressed to ensure active mobility is integrated, inclusive and accessible by all? 2. How can cities guarantee accessibility and inclusion, especially for persons with reduced mobility, suburban residents and gender-diverse users? 3. How do cities engineer inclusion and accessibility into design and service delivery from the start so that active mobility truly connects people to public transport and other sustainable modes across the city and beyond city borders? 4. Where are the practical limits of strictly active modes and when is it preferable to promote soft mobility (e.g. e-bikes) or demand responsive services as part of an accessible intermodal system? 5. Which first and last-mile features around stations and interchanges most effectively enable integrated active journeys at different spatial scales?	OKRQ 1, 3 and 4
Data and technology	6. Which data-driven approaches demonstrably improve the implementation of successful active and integrated mobility measures? 7. How sensors, tracking systems, smart services, apps, and digital urban mobility management tools can support the integration of active mobility options? 8. Which specific technologies deliver the greatest impact for walking and/or cycling when paired with infrastructure, across planning, operations, user information and enforcement?	OKRQ 1, 3 and 4

Topics	Refined research questions	Reference to original KRQs
Behaviour change	9. Under which combination combinations of measure packages do cities observe the largest and most durable increases in walking and cycling? In what sequence of measure were these packages introduced? 10. How can cities effectively drive a shift in public behaviour towards active mobility? 11. What is the return on investment/effort of behaviour levers when they are layered after infrastructure and rule changes? How does this vary by context? 12. What keeps usage from fading after launch and measured over time?	OKRQ 1, 3 and 4
Key challenges	13. What does success look like in terms of a paradigm shift in active mobility and what are the key success factors for achieving this change? 14. Which governance arrangements and which sequences of actions are associated with successful implementation, public support and durability across electoral cycles? 15. What funding and financing approaches unlock delivery and maintenance at city and FUA scale? 16. What prevents good practice from spreading and what is the minimum replicable package that smaller or less-resources cities can adopt with confidence? 17. Which transferability conditions are non-negotiable and which elements can be adapted to local context without losing effect	OKRQ 2

Table 1 presents these refined questions and shows their correspondence to the original KRQs. They range from practical design and inclusion issues (e.g., which groups and needs must be addressed to ensure accessibility across FUAs) to technology choices (e.g., which specific tools most effectively support active mobility), behavioural sequencing, and the governance and funding conditions for replication.

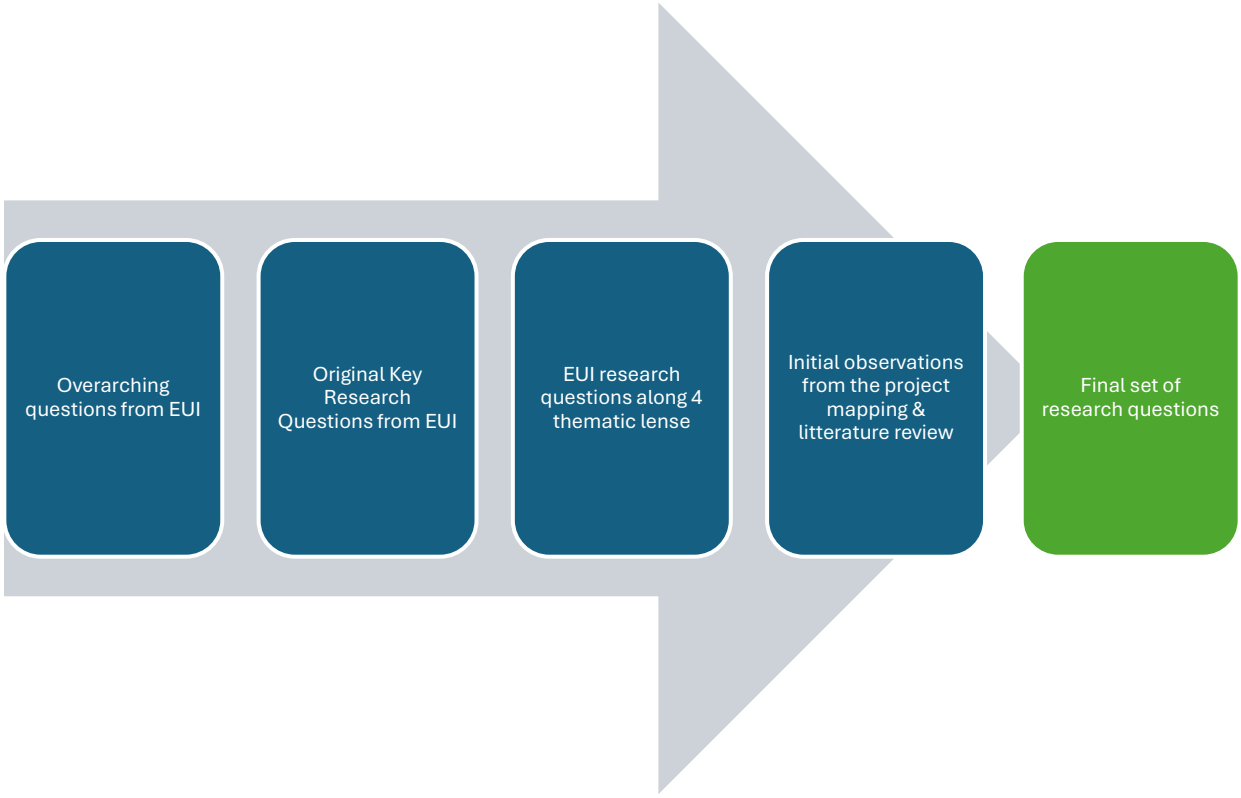

Figure 1. Overview of the research question definition process

By integrating the initial framing provided by EUI with our contextual analysis and working observations, we ensure that the Policy Lab is equipped to deliver answers that are both evidence-based and practice-ready. The Policy Lab will now proceed to address these seventeen refined questions through a stepwise methodology:

- **Desk research** will map and cluster projects to allow for comparability, select a shortlist of cities meeting defined criteria (evidence of integrated active mobility, maturity, replicability, and presence of behaviour-change and data elements), and prepare the ground for deeper enquiry.
- **Questionnaires** will fill gaps left by desk research, yielding comparable data and a first layer of lessons on design and replication.
- **Hearings** will enable in-depth discussion with selected case studies, helping to isolate the most effective combinations of measures and the contextual conditions behind their success.
- **Focus groups** will validate and pressure-test transferability, ensuring the lessons hold across different city types and scales.
- **The EU City Lab** event will place the initial findings into a wider integrated-mobility context, allowing practitioners and Managing Authorities to react and enrich the conclusions.

This methodological sequence guarantees that each refined question will be answered with comparable evidence, triangulated across cases and perspectives. In doing so, the Policy Lab will generate practical guidance for cities and Managing Authorities, bridging the gap between

the well-established "why" and "what" of active mobility and the urgently needed "how" of implementation, integration and replication.

5 METHODOLOGY

The study is structured in three sequential phases, evidence gathering, knowledge exchange, and synthesis, so that activities, deliverables, and quality assurance follow the Task structure defined in the ToR and the Special Terms & Conditions. This phasing provides a clear pathway from scanning the available knowledge to validating and translating it into practical guidance. Governance and coordination are anchored by the EUI Permanent Secretariat, which serves as the primary interface for planning, escalation, and approvals. Strategic oversight is provided by a Sounding Board convened three times during the assignment, two online sessions and one in-person meeting aligned with the EU City Lab, to review interim outputs, test emerging findings, and steer final recommendations. Ad hoc coordination with EUI occurs as needed to resolve operational issues or seize opportunities, and consultation with the European Commission is channelled through EUI to ensure alignment with programme objectives and communication protocols.

The evidence-gathering phase begins with a structured desk review and a mapping exercise across EUI, UIA and URBACT portfolios. Projects are clustered thematically and by implementation features, with explicit selection criteria that privilege EUI cases while ensuring complementarity with URBACT, geographical balance across Member States and regions, and adequate representation of medium and small cities. Existing URBACT Baseline Studies and inputs from programme officers are used to complete gaps and verify maturity. Immediately after mapping, a short stakeholder questionnaire is issued to the shortlisted cities, using contact lists provided by EUI. The survey window is two weeks and is designed to triangulate the data collected through the desk research and clarify any gaps there may be in relation to the measures being implemented, their transferability and scalability.

Primary qualitative evidence is then developed through non-public thematic online hearings with the shortlisted cities. These hearings elicit operational detail on delivery, governance, inclusion, and barriers, and they explicitly probe, to the extent possible, functional urban area dynamics and urban-rural linkages where relevant. Where additional expertise is needed, targeted key-informant interviews may be added, for example with the EUI and URBACT experts who have been involved in those projects, to triangulate practices and contextualise what is transferable. Each hearing yields a memo that documents the implementation narrative, enabling conditions, risks, and lessons, and these memos serve as the backbone for the case write-ups.

A key milestone of this phase is the EU City Lab on active mobility delivered with URBACT, conceived as an active knowledge-sharing forum rather than a one-way presentation of results. Its agenda and speakers are prepared early, cities are invited to present practice, including Strasbourg as requested, and invitations are issued immediately to maximise participation. Registration is public and partners are encouraged to disseminate the call widely. The City Lab includes a curated site-visit component to ground discussions in real environments. The last stakeholder activity consists of two public online focus groups convened to test interim insights with a broader community of practice, including city networks such as POLIS and Eurocities. Each session produces a short Focus Group Brief that records challenges, counter-examples and refinements to the emerging guidance.

The synthesis phase converts the accumulated evidence into a coherent portfolio of case studies and a set of practitioner-oriented recommendations. Recommendations are framed as practical guidance, what to adopt, in what sequence, under which enabling conditions, and with what risks and mitigations. A validation session with the Sounding Board is scheduled back-to-back with the EU City Lab to secure strategic endorsement, identify any final evidence gaps, and agree on emphasis before final drafting and layout. This process ensures that the final outputs are evidence-based, balanced across geographies and city types, and directly usable by urban authorities and managing authorities seeking to implement active and integrated mobility solutions.

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7 ANNEXES

7.1 METHODOLOGY FOR CASE STUDY SELECTION & CRITERIA

This annex explains how we identified and refined the portfolio of case studies used in the EUI Policy Lab on Integrated and Active Urban Mobility. The process was designed to (i) foreground implemented walking and cycling measures embedded in integrated mobility systems, (ii) ensure geographical and typological balance, and (iii) generate practice-ready, transferable insights for cities. It follows a phased approach and aligns with its four study lenses, accessibility & inclusion, data & technology, behaviour change, and barriers to modal shift.

From the documents provided by EUI, we compiled a long-list of 157 city cases drawn from 67 EUI/UIA/URBACT projects and related EU knowledge streams. We have developed a set of categorising elements to gather sufficient information on all city cases extract to inform our selection. The categorising elements are depicted in the table below. The selection of the in-depth case studies will take place in two iterations:

- A first shorter list of 30 case studies will be identified based on the information gathered for basic, first and third level criteria, informed by the desk research. The desk research was conducted based on available online documentation and documentation provided by EUI on these projects and initiatives.
- A second shorter list of 10-12 case studies, out of the initial 30 short listed, will be identified based on the information gathered previously and through a questionnaire filled by the case study representatives, covering a majority of the second level criteria.

Table 2. Categorising elements

Level (prioritisation)	Title	Description	How we record information
Basic	**City Size**	less than 100.000 = SMALL	Choose from list
		100.000-250.000 = MEDIUM	
		250.000-500.000 = BIG	
		500.000-1.000.000 = LARGE	
		1.000.000 + = METROPOLIS	
Basic	**Geographical Region**	Distribution of the Countries along four geographical areas (East, North, Central West, South)	Choose from list
Basic	**City Type**	Metropolitan, multi-centre, independent city, FUA, rural-peripheral	Choose from list
Basic	**Active mode**	Identify whether the city addresses cycling and/or walking	(0 = not evident, 1 = partial, 2 = strong)
Basic	**Urban Node**	Check if the city is an urban node or not (extracted from the urban nodes lists from TEN-T)	Yes or No answer

First	**Integrated with other modes**	Identify whether the city addresses active modes with other modes (Public transport, autonomous shuttle, etc.)	(0 = not evident, 1 = partial, 2 = strong)
First	**Type of Intervention**	Infrastructure; Behavioural campaigns/education; Governance & policy frameworks; Service innovation (on-demand, shared mobility); Technology/data platforms; Pilot/testing / tactical urbanism; Capacity-building & participatory processes.	(0 = not evident, 1 = partial, 2 = strong)
First	**Scale of intervention**	Street/neighbourhood; City-wide; Metropolitan / FUA; Corridor / regional.	Choose from list
First	**Main Thematic Focus**	Behaviour change; Accessibility & inclusion; Intermodality / modal shift; Urban-rural linkages; Public space reallocation / low-traffic zones; Safety.	(0 = not evident, 1 = partial, 2 = strong)
First	**Main Target Groups**	General public; Schoolchildren; Students group; People with reduced mobility / disabled; Women/gender-sensitive; Elderly; Tourists / visitors; Commuters.	(0 = not evident, 1 = partial, 2 = strong)
First	**Project Maturity**	Strategy & baseline; Pilot / testing; Early implementation; Operational / scaling / mature.	Choose from list
First	**Behaviour change element**	Awareness campaign; stakeholder engagement; communication; co-creation; training; incentive;disinsentive (fees, prohibition, fines)	(0 = not evident, 1 = partial, 2 = strong)
Second	**Complementary measure**	Speed management; parking management; curbside management; road space management	(0 = not evident, 1 = partial, 2 = strong)
Second	**Governance & delivery model**	Integrated SUMP/IAP alignment; Participatory ULGs / co-design; Interdepartmental municipal lead; Public-private partnerships; Cross-municipal bodies;	(0 = not evident, 1 = partial, 2 = strong)
Second	**Use of innovative technology**	Apps & digital platforms; ITS/real-time data; Monitoring sensors; Open data / digital observatory; Gamification / incentive tech.	(0 = not evident, 1 = partial, 2 = strong)
Second	**Funding & investment model**	EU instrument (EUI/UIA/URBACT/H2020) + co-funding; Municipal budget; Private investment; Mixed; Low-cost soft measures.	(0 = not evident, 1 = partial, 2 = strong)
Second	**Barriers encountered**	Institutional/Governance barriers, Financial/Funding barriers, Technical/infrastructure barriers, Behavioural/cultural barriers, regulatory/legal barriers, Operational capacity barriers, Data & knowledge gaps, Political oposition/fear	(0 = not evident, 1 = partial, 2 = strong)
Second	**Success Factors**	Strong political commitment & leadership, participatory approach, strategic partnerships, successful financial innovation, policy integration, data-driven planning & evaluation, quick-wins & visible results, capacity building, Good internal and external communication, trust in local leaders, previous successes that have made people open to change	(0 = not evident, 1 = partial, 2 = strong)

Third (nice-to-know)	**SUMP**	Check if the city already has an SUMP (extracted from the SUMP City Database)	Yes, No, In Progress

The first selection of 30 case studies was achieved through multiple steps:

- Only cases with clear, evidenced implementation for walking/cycling (not solely intentions or side measures) were analysed further. This operationalises the Lab's working definition of active mobility.
- Then only cases with evidenced implementation for walking and/or cycling in combination with other modes or as part of an integrated mobility approach were analysed further. This operationalises the Lab's focus of integrated active mobility and modal shift.

Among these cases analysed, the 30 case studies were selected with the aim to achieve a balanced representation from the perspective of

- **Programme and initiative represented:** Our selection sought a balanced representation of cities across the three programmes, EUI (including City-to-City exchanges), UIA and URBACT, so that findings would be comparable and broadly relevant. Perfect proportionality, however, is constrained by the composition and maturity of the underlying portfolios. Although EUI C2C cities account for roughly half of the cities reviewed, only a small subset addresses active mobility directly. In addition, the "unit of analysis" differs across initiatives: URBACT networks typically include 8,10 partner cities per project, EUI actions often involve five or fewer, and UIA projects generally cover a single city. Finally, project timing affects the evidentiary base: many EUI projects only commenced in late 2024, whereas a number of UIA and URBACT projects have concluded or are close to completion, yielding more developed lessons learned. In light of these factors, the portfolio balances programme representation with evidentiary depth, prioritising cases with documented implementation while maintaining diversity across the three initiatives.

1. **Geographic coverage**: aim for ≥15-20% selection rate per geographic regions (North, East, South, and Central-West Europe) (relative to that countries' and regions' total cases), unless total national cases were too few to allow precise calibration.
2. **City sizes:** aim for ≥15-20% selection rate per city size (relative to the city size' total cases). This aimed to include small and medium cities alongside large/metropolitan areas to reflect transferability across capacities.
3. **Typological spread:** cover some representativity of different scales such as street/neighbourhood, city-wide, metropolitan/FUA, and corridor/regional scales.
4. **Thematic spread:** guarantee coverage of the Lab's four lenses (inclusion; data/tech; behaviour change;) across the set, consistent with the study focus.
5. **Type of intervention**: We classify what was actually delivered: Infrastructure; Behavioural campaigns/education; Governance & policy frameworks; Service innovation (on-demand, shared mobility); Technology/data platforms; Pilot/testing / tactical urbanism; Capacity-building & participatory processes. This informed the selection to have a diverse form of intervention still represented at this stage.
6. **Main target group**: We classify who was the main target group of the measure: General public; Schoolchildren; Students group; People with reduced mobility / disabled; Women/gender-sensitive; Elderly; Tourists / visitors; Commuters. This informed the selection to have a diverse target groups at this stage.

7. **Type of behaviour change**: We classify the type of behaviour change: Awareness campaign; stakeholder engagement; communication; co-creation; training; incentive; disincentive (fees, prohibition, fines) This informed the selection to have a diverse form of behaviour change methods still represented at this stage.

For the EUI C2C cities, those shortlisted are only the cities who will share their knowledge with the city who has applied to the City-to-City exchange. However, during the hearings, both cities will be invited, to better understand the scalability and replicability of the measures.

This approach has been validated with EUI. We will perform a second selection to reach 10-12 cases, guided by the responses to the questionnaire, allowing for further triangulation. The final shortlist of 10-12 case studies will roughly account for 1/3 of URBACT cities and 2/3 of EUI/UIA/EUI C2C cities.

Limitations and mitigation

- **Heterogeneous evidence**: not all cities report outcomes uniformly; we mitigated this by favouring cases with documented implementation and with triangulation with the questionnaire.
- **Time-bound snapshots:** projects are at different stages; where needed, we footnote whether measures are completed vs. scaling.

This stepwise reduction aims to preserve regional balance and the scale mix while sharpening the emphasis on implemented walking/cycling inside integrated systems.

7.2 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

Figure 2. Overview of stakeholder engagement activities

Questionnaire

As part of the evidence-gathering phase, the Policy Lab will use a structured questionnaire to collect comparable information from approximately 30 pre-selected city case studies. The purpose of the questionnaire is to gain a detailed understanding of how different cities have implemented integrated active mobility measures, the motivations behind them, the barriers and enablers encountered, and the outcomes achieved.

Responses will allow the team to identify patterns across cities, highlight which measures are most transferable, and assess the maturity of each case in terms of available evidence. Based on the responses, a shortlist of 10,12 cities will be selected for deeper engagement through hearings and focus groups.

The questionnaire is aimed at urban authorities and their partners directly involved in the design and implementation of active mobility measures in the EUI/UIA/URBACT projects. By gathering inputs from different governance levels and stakeholders, the Policy Lab will ensure its findings reflect the practical realities of implementation and provide evidence-based recommendations for replication and scaling across Europe.

Thematic Online Hearings

The online hearings aim to gather deeper insights into shortlisted case studies, providing a safe and confidential space where cities can openly discuss challenges, experiences, and lessons learned. The results will directly inform the Shortlist of Good Practices and serve as a primary evidence base for the study's recommendations.

Format: Semi-structured interviews with cities. We propose to have either one-on-one hearings or hearings with 2 cities together to enable the space for deep discussions, when this composition provides added value to the discussions.

Hearing´s duration: The total duration of the hearings will be up to 24 hours, following the logic of 2 hour maximum per selected city for the best practice. The total time will be broken down into smaller sessions of 1-2 hours. Sessions will last up to 2 hour for one-on-one hearings or up to 3 hours for grouped hearings with 2 cities together.

Cities grouping: Once the final selection of the 10-12 best practices is done, we will assess them according to the type of intervention, main thematic focus addressed, type of intervention e.g., school street, awareness campaigns, pedestrianisation, tourism interventions, etc., and target groups addressed. to determine if the hearing will be conducted on a one-to-one session or a group hearing. For the EUI C2C cities selected, we aim to invite the two cities involved in the EUI C2C activity, with the objective of obtaining further insights into the learnings and transferability that took place between the leaders and followers.

Dates: The hearings will take place between the 13th of October and the 17th of October. Three colleagues will be available to conduct the interviews. The shortlisted cities will be contacted to confirm their availability for the hearings, and distribution of the interviews among the colleagues will be based on cities availability. This approach allows for more flexibility.

Invitations to cities will be sent tentatively on 3rd of October, after responses to the Online Questionnaire have been received and the cities have been shortlisted and agreed upon with EUI

Participants

- Rupprecht Consult (organisers and facilitators)
- City authorities from invited cities (minimum one representative per city with in-depth knowledge of the case study)
- URBACT project officers (if applicable/relevant)

Agenda: Example for Group Online Hearing of 60 minutes

Time	Activity	Responsible
5´	Welcome, aim of the Online Hearing, agenda of the meeting, and practical information (recording of the session, how the information will be used in the study, and expected outcomes)	Rupprecht
5´	Round of introductions	All
45´	Questions and Answers focused on:	Rupprecht

	• Clarifying questions, following up on the questionnaire (case by case) • Challenges • Success factors (preconditions) • Lessons learned	
5´	Closing	Rupprecht

Hosting: All sessions will be organised on Microsoft Teams, with the option to use live transcription and recording for documentation purposes.

Preparation: Each participating city will receive a briefing pack in advance (project summaries developed based on our desk research & their responses to the questionnaire), interview guides, and expected outcomes.

Moderation: Each session will include an interviewer and a live recording and transcription of the session to ensure clarity, focus, and accurate documentation.

Ethics and accessibility: All outputs will comply with data protection and accessibility standards, and explicit consent will be requested for recording and use of content in deliverables.

Data analysis: Internally, we will process all input coming from the hearings using a single Excel table, which will be structured following a basic set of questions, e.g., on the challenges, success factors, and lessons learned, to facilitate the analysis and drawing conclusions.

EU City Lab Event

The EU City Lab will transform the analytical insights from Phase 1 (hearings, desk research, questionnaire, and focus groups) into actionable peer-learning. It will serve a dual purpose:

- To road-test preliminary findings with a larger selection of practitioners and stakeholders.
- To accelerate the transfer of integrated and active mobility solutions across European municipalities through exchange, reflection, and capacity-building.

Format: 1.5-day in-person event, followed by a sounding board meeting.

Date: 28-29 October

Participants: Around 80 participants are expected among city representatives, practitioners and institutional stakeholders, including EUI / UIA beneficiary cities, URBACT municipalities, thematic networks (POLIS, CIVITAS), European Commission, and others.

Agenda: Refer to the co-developed agenda with EUI

Moderation: By Bonnie Fenton, Rupprecht Consult; and Mary Dellenbaugh-Losse, URBACT

Accessibility: All sessions will be documented with high-quality note-taking.

Logistics: On-site technical logistics and equipment will be handled by the hosting municipality and EUI partners; the contractor will adapt pedagogical formats to the available conditions.

Outputs: A concise City Lab Proceedings Note (max. 10 pages, richly illustrated) will be delivered within two weeks, including participant list, synthesised insights, recommendations, and poster files uploaded to Portico.

Online Focus Group Sessions

The online focus groups aim to analyse success factors, explore common challenges, and compare implementation approaches across different urban contexts, building upon the discussions from the EU City Lab. Through a dialogue and critical exchange with external stakeholders, findings from Phase 1 and 2 of the study will be validated and refined. The sessions will also raise awareness among the wider community of urban mobility stakeholders, enabling the opportunity for learning and dissemination. Unlike webinars, these will be interactive discussions structured around participant contributions and peer-learning.

The objective of the focus group is to disseminate the initial findings of the study and foster peer-learning among cities. At the same time, it aims to validate the direction we are taking through the study, to ensure that the initial findings resonate with the experts and cities and, according to their feedback, reshape and complement the results.

Format: Two interactive online group discussions, each lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes. Each focus group will start with a first part of 45 minutes focusing on the discussion of burning topics, followed by a second part of an additional 45 minutes addressing the presentation and feedback. A break of 15 minutes will be scheduled between both sessions.

Topics: Focus Groups topics will focus on the most critical challenges and driving factors identified across the selected case studies analysed as a result of the questionnaire and online hearings.

Dates: Slots will be confirmed from the dates and times below.

- First Focus Group: 10th or 11th of November
- Second Focus Group: 10th and 21st of November

A "Save the Date" will be sent to participants on Week 41, after the finalisation of the shortlist of case-studies, enabling ample time for dissemination and registration. The Focus groups will be disseminated through various channels, highlighting that it will build upon the EU City. Lab

Participants: The sessions will bring together city practitioners, institutional stakeholders, and thematic experts.

- The 30 cities selected invited to fill out the Online Questionnaire (based on a pre-selection of cities), which include the 10-12 selected case studies for the Policy Lab
- The 10-12 cities selected for the Online Hearings.

- Key experts who can provide useful feedback on the study findings. Our suggestion is:
    - 1 network representative with a focus on active mobility from either POLIS, Eurocities, or CIVITAS
    - 1 representative from the European Cycling Federation
    - 1 representative from Walk21
    - 1 representative from the European Pedestrian Federation
    - 1 representative from the EU Urban Agenda, Mobility partnership
    - In case any of these experts are not available we will reach out our wider network.
- The public

Agenda:

Time	**Activity**	**Responsible**
5´	Welcome, aim of the Online Focus Group, agenda	Rupprecht
20´	Panel discussion with cities (up to 4 from selected case studies & wider group)	Rupprecht and city representatives
20´	Panel discussion with experts (up to 4) - reflecting upon previous discussion	Rupprecht and experts invited
5'	Summary of discussion topics	Rupprecht
Break (10´)		
Part 2: Presentation and feedback		
20´	Short framing input summarising preliminary findings from the study	Rupprecht
20´	Interactive Feedback session through a Miro board or Mentimeter	Rupprecht, selected city representatives and experts
5´	Closing	Rupprecht

Engagement: Use of tools such as Miro and Mentimeter to gather insights from participants

Hosting: All sessions will be organised on Microsoft Teams, with the option to use live transcription and recording for documentation purposes.

Moderation: Each session will include a moderator and a minute-taker to ensure clarity, focus, and accurate documentation.

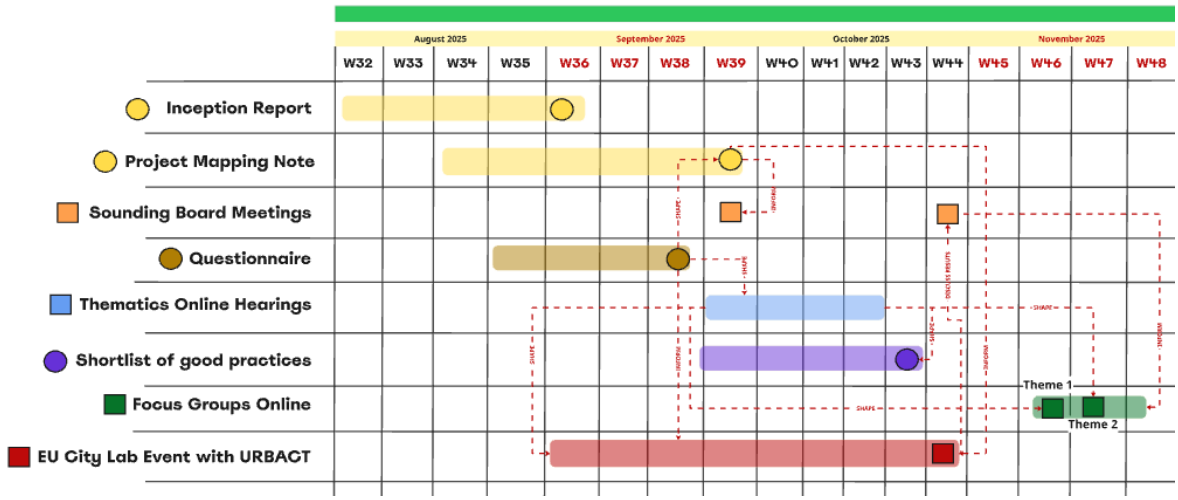

Figure 3. Timeline and dependencies of stakeholder engagement activities

7.3 OVERVIEW OF WORKPLAN AND RESOURCES

Tasks	Respon sible	Main expert	Bonnie Fenton	Katy Huaylla	Jessica Adrian	Morgane Juliat	Leventcan Er	Dr Wolfgang Backhaus	TOTAL
Expert Role			**TL**	**SE2**	**COM**	**SE2**	**SE3**	**SE3**	
Task 1.1: Design of the Methodological Approach	SE3		2	0.5	0	0.5	0.5	2	**5.5**
Task 1.2: Desk Review and Project Clustering	JE3		1	0.5	0	2	3	0.5	**7**
Task 1.3: Stakeholder Questionnaire	JE2/JE3		1	0.5	0	3	2	0.5	**7**
Task 1.4: Thematic Online Hearings	TL		3	2	0.5	2	1	1	**9.5**
Task 2.1: Online Focus Group Sessions	SE2		1	2	0	4	2	0.5	**9.5**
Task 2.2: EU City Lab Event with URBACT	TL		3	1	1	0	3	0.5	**8.5**
Task 2.3: Post-City Lab Sounding Board Meeting	TL		2	0	0	3	2	2	**9**
Task 2.4: Dissemination of Initial Findings	COM		0.5	0.5	1.5	0.5	0.5	0	**3.5**
Task 3.1: Drafting Practical Policy Recommendations	SE3		1.5	0.5	0	1	1	1	**5**
Task 3.2: Multimedia Resource Compilation - Communication	COM		0	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	**2**

Tasks	Respon sible expert	Bonnie Fenton	Katy Huaylla	Jessica Adrian	Morgane Juliat	Leventcan Er	Dr Wolfgang Backhaus	TOTAL
Task 3.3: Remote Consultation and Validation	TL	3	0.5	0	3	2	0	**8.5**
Task 3.4: Finalisation and Dissemination of Outputs	TL	1	0.5	1	0.5	1.5	0	**4.5**
Task 3.5: Evaluation and Feedback Collection	TL	0.5	0	0	0	0.5	0	**1**
Total		**19.5**	**9**	**4.5**	**20**	**19.5**	**8**	**80.5**
Optional Task: Capacity Building	TL	4	2		2.5			

Table 3. Resources planned per tasks and per experts

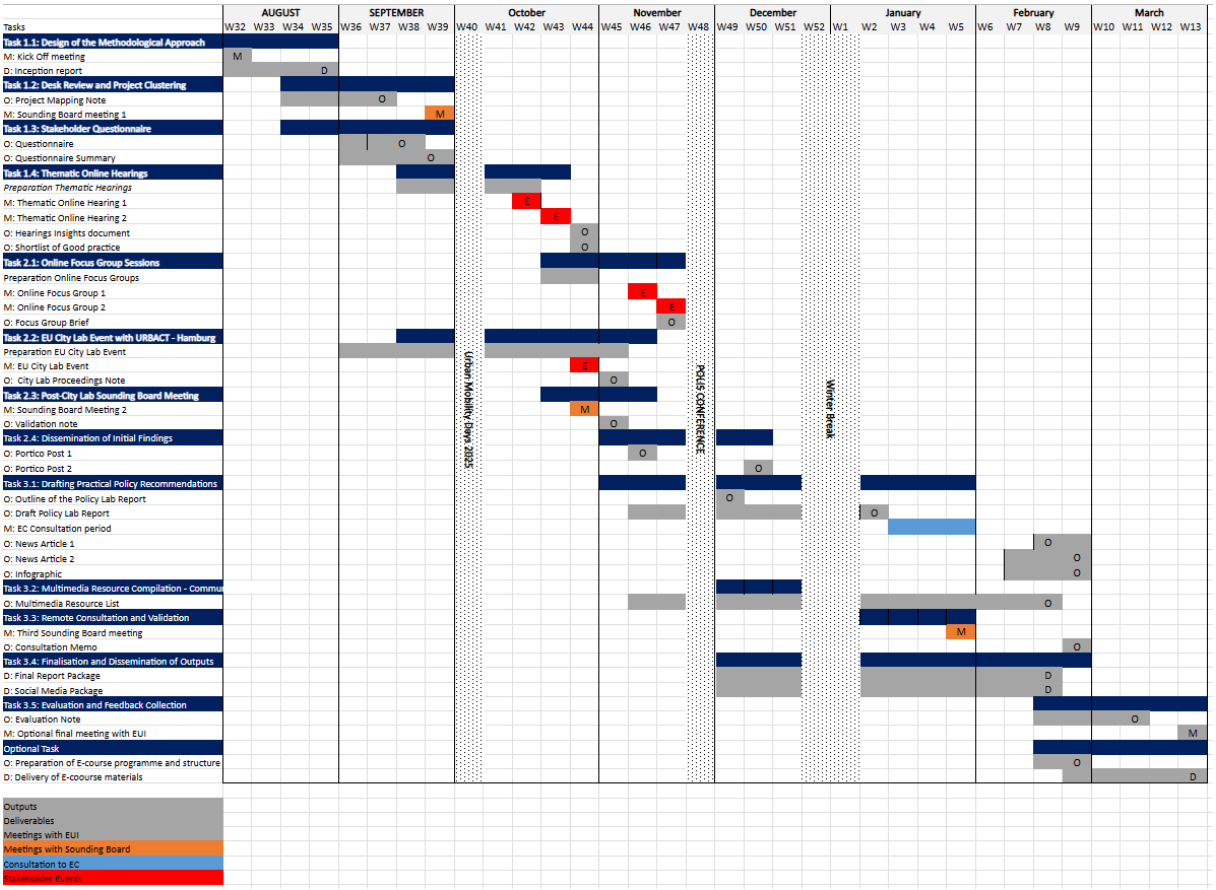

Figure 4. Overview of timeline of activities of the EU Policy Lab

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